THRILLING TALES OF HORROR & SUSPENSE

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DARK MYSTERIES

AUG. NO. 13

10¢

DARK MYSTERIES

WEIRD TALES OF HORROR!

IT'S TOM'S LEG... BUT HE WAS EXECUTED LAST NIGHT!

the TERROR of the HUNGRY CATS

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"With God All Things Are Possible!"

Dear Friend:

Are You Facing Problems of Any Kind?

Are You Worried About Your Health?

Are You Worried About Money Troubles, or Your Job?

Are You Worried About Some One Dear To You?

Are You Worried About Your Children, Your Home Life, Your Marriage?

Do You Ever Get Lonely, Unhappy or Discouraged?

Would You Like To Have More Happiness, Success, "Good Fortune" in Life?

IF you have any of these *PROBLEMS*, or others like them, dear friend, then here is wonderful news . . . news of a thrilling *NEW WAY* of *PRAYER* that is helping men and women everywhere to meet the *PROBLEMS* of their lives more happily, triumphantly and successfully than ever before!

And this *NEW WAY* of *PRAYER* can just as surely bring a whole new world of happiness and joy to *YOU!*

Founded upon a modern psychological interpretation of the Scriptures, this *NEW WAY* of *PRAYER* is designed to bring the love and power of God into your daily life in a more real and direct way than you have ever known.

To bring you the glorious Wisdom and Beauty of the Bible we all love so well, and to help you apply in a practical way the Teachings of Jesus Christ so that the *ABUNDANT LIFE*—of health, happiness and prosperity which He promised can really be yours!

It doesn't matter what part *PRAYER* has had in your life up until now!

If you are one for whom *PRAYER* has always been a glorious blessing—then this *NEW WAY* will make *PRAYER* even more wonderful and blessed for you!

Or, if you have turned to *PRAYER* only once in a while in the past—if sometimes you have felt you just couldn't make God hear you—then this *NEW WAY* may open a whole new world of *FAITH* and *SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING* for you. You will find God's *LOVE* and *POWER* coming right into your daily life in a more real and direct way than ever before!

GOD LOVES YOU!

He wants you to be happy! He wants to help you! So don't wait, dear friend! Don't let another minute go by! If you are troubled, worried or unhappy *IN ANY WAY*—please, please clip the handy coupon now and mail with 10c stamps or coin so we can send you *FULL INFORMATION* by *AIR MAIL* about this wonderful *NEW WAY* of *PRAYER* which is helping so many, many others and may just as surely and quickly help *YOU!*

The reason we are so *sure* we can help you is that, *for more than ten years*, we have been helping other men and women just like you to live closer to God—to be happier and more successful! We know this because we get wonderful, wonderful letters like these *in almost every mail!*

"The dark clouds have rolled away and the sun of Christ has come in"!—H.D., Balt., Md.

"I believe you have a heaven sent message for everyone"! —Mrs. D.W., Mo.

"What a comfort, what a blessing, what a help your Prayers are"!—Mr. C.S.M., Ala.

"More prosperity and happiness in our home than the whole twenty years before"!—Myrtle P., Merryville, La.

"You have taught me to pray and it's been the happiest time of my life"!—Viola G., Homer, Ill.

"I feel better than in years and the Doctor said he never saw the like"!—A.B., Augusta, Ga.

"God is daily showering His blessings on me"! —Augusta E., Ill.

"I sincerely believe God directed me to you"!—Mrs. A.S., Wisc.

Receiving wonderful letters like these makes us very happy, and it would make us very happy to help you! But we can't begin until you send us the coupon below.

So, don't wait, dear friend! If you have *PROBLEMS* of any kind—if you would like to live a *MORE ABUNDANT LIFE*—of *BETTER HEALTH, GREATER PROSPERITY, TRUE HAPPINESS*—please, please don't let another minute slip by! Clip and mail the coupon now, so we can send you our wonderful *NEW Message of PRAYER and FAITH by AIR MAIL!* We promise you—you will bless this day!

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HORROR OF MIXED TORSOS!

THE YOUNG LADY TURNS AND PEERS INTO THE SHADOW WHERE YOU LURK. THE SIGHT OF HER FACE MAKES YOUR HEART POUND AND HAMMER AGAINST YOUR RIBS. YES, YOU, TOO, UGLY MONSTER THO YOU ARE, POSSESS A HEART, HUNGRY FOR LOVE.

WHAT WAS THAT? I HEARD A SOUND, MR. GREEN.

JUST MY ASSISTANT, GARTH HUNT.

IT- IT'S FAITH WALES! MY LOVE, MY ADORED ONE!

I MUST GO, MR. GREEN. GOOD-DAY.

GOOD-DAY, MISS WALES.

GO ON, RUN FROM ME. BUT SOME DAY I'LL HAVE YOU.

SO YOUR NAME MAKES HER HURRY OUT! ALL SHE SEES IS YOUR UGLY FACE, NOT THE BEAUTY IN YOUR SOUL, THE BURNING LOVE IN YOUR HEART. EVER SINCE YOU WENT TO SCHOOL TOGETHER YOU HAVE LOVED THE EXQUISITE FAITH AND NOW YOU ARE A MAN AND CONSUMED WITH A BURNING LOVE FOR HER.

YOUR LONELY LIFE GOES ON, BROODINGLY, DESOLATELY, SHUNNING PEOPLE AND BEING SHUNNED BY THEM: SURELY THE FLOWERS WILL LET YOU LOOK AT THEM!

AH, FAIR TULIPS, YOU CAN'T RUN FROM THE SIGHT OF ME!

BUT YOUR TOUCH WITHERS THEIR FRAIL BEAUTY. EVEN A MINDLESS THING RESENTS, HATES YOUR SHEER UGLINESS.

THE FRIGHTENED CHILDREN FLUTTER AWAY IN PANIC.

ONLY THE SILENT DEAD DO NOT RUN FROM ME! THAT'S WHY I WORK NEAR THEM.

YOU GO ON EXISTING FROM DAY TO DAY, SORELY WOUNDED IN MIND AND HEART. THEN ONE DAY, EVERYTHING CHANGES. LOVE AND BEAUTY BECOME YOURS AND ALL THE PAIN OF LIVING DROPS AWAY.

EVEN A DOG, MAN'S FRIEND, ATTACKS YOU AS THO YOU WERE A STRANGE BEAST. YOU RUN HOME TO HIDE ONCE MORE IN THE SHADOWS WHERE YOU BELONG.

SOB! SOB!

GARTH, WHERE ARE YOU? NAIL UP THIS COFFIN. HER FAMILY IS IN EUROPE. ONLY A NEIGHBOR OR TWO WILL ATTEND THE FUNERAL TOMORROW.

YES, SIR, WHO DIED, SIR?

YES IT IS FAITH WALES WHO IS TO BE BURIED! THE LOVE OF YOUR LIFE, THE BEAUTEOUS, SOFT CREATURE, IS NOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME, NEAR YOUR ARMS. TEARS OF HAPPINESS, ELATION, FILL YOUR EYES AS YOU SEE HER CLOSE, CLOSE.

OH, NO, YOU WILL NOT LET THEM BURY YOUR LOVELY FAITH IN THE COLD GROUND. YOU HAVE JUST THE PLACE, PERFECT FOR HER BEAUTY. THE OLD GLASS AQUARIUM IN THE CELLAR — YOU WILL EMBALM HER AND KEEP HER HIDDEN THERE, PUT IT IN THE COAL BIN.

JUST IN TIME, YOU GET THE LID OF THE COFFIN, CLEVERLY WEIGHTED, NAILED UP. NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW THAT YOU HAVE FAITH FOR YOUR VERY OWN— DOWN THERE IN THE CELLAR.

YOU HAVE MOVED INTO YOUR NEW HOME—WITH YOUR BELOVED, FAITH. HOW HAPPY LIFE HAS BECOME FOR YOU! THE BATS WHIZZING ABOUT SEEM TO LIKE YOU; THE GNAWING RATS, TOO. AT LAST YOU ARE ACCEPTED BY LIVING CREATURES!

THEN ONE DAY A TERRIBLE THREAT HANGS OVER YOUR NEW-FOUND HAPPINESS. YOU HEAR MR. GREEN YELLING FOR YOU, BANGING ON THE CELLAR DOOR. YOU HURRY TO LOCK UP YOUR SECRET HOME WHERE FAITH WAITS FOR YOU . . .

SLOWLY YOU ASCEND THOSE STAIRS. YOU HAVE A SENSE OF FOREBODING...

THE WORLD TREMBLES AROUND YOU, READY TO COLLAPSE. AN UNCLE OF FAITH'S HAS TURNED UP ORDERING HER BODY DISINTERRED FOR REBURIAL IN EUROPE! THE BLOOD THROBS IN YOUR HEAD WITH INSISTENT HAMMERING. YOU WILL NOT PART WITH FAITH!

GARTH, I'M LEAVING WITH MISS WALES' UNCLE. YOU TAKE CARE OF THE SHERIFF'S ORDER.

HERE'S THE ORDER FOR THE BODY.

YES, YES.

THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO STOP THEM. YOU ARE ENTITLED TO YOUR BIT OF HAPPINESS AND BEAUTY AFTER ALL THE YEARS OF TORTURE. YES, THERE'S A WAY TO STOP THEIR PLOT TO TAKE FAITH AWAY...

SORRY, SIR, BUT I NEED YOUR HELP WITH THE TOOLS. THEY'RE DOWN HERE.

ISN'T THERE SOMEONE ELSE TO HELP AROUND HERE? HURRY UP, MAN!

NOW TO GET RID OF YOUR BODY, SHERIFF.

BEHIND THE TOOL CHEST! THAT'S A GOOD HIDING PLACE! NO ONE EVER GOES THERE BUT YOU, GARTH. BEFORE LONG YOUR FRIENDS THE RATS WILL HAVE DEVOURED ALL EVIDENCE.

THE LEGS HERE...

WHAT A BLOODY MESS YOU'VE MADE! YOU'LL HAVE TO CLEAN UP FAST BEFORE MR. GREEN RETURNS. THE SMELL OF BLOOD IS SICKENING! YOU'LL HAVE TO SWAB THE PLACE TO REMOVE ALL TRACES.

...AND THEN THE UPPER TORSO IN THAT OLD, BROKEN COFFIN.

YOU STUFF THE REST OF THE SHERIFF INTO THE COFFIN, AS YOU TINGLE ALL OVER WITH A SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT. YOU'VE SAVED YOUR DARLING—SHE IS STILL YOURS IN YOUR LITTLE APARTMENT THERE IN THE COAL BIN!

GET IN THERE, MR. SHERIFF! AND STOP STARING AT ME!

SEE DEAR, YOU ARE STILL MINE!

THE JOB'S ALMOST FINISHED WHEN YOU HEAR A VOICE UPSTAIRS IN THE MORTUARY SHOP, CALLING LOUDLY, INSISTENTLY. MORE COMPLICATIONS? NEVER MIND! SOMEHOW YOU FEEL THEY CAN NEVER BEAT YOU.

ANYONE HERE? I WANT SOME ATTENTION, PLEASE!

RIGHT AWAY! COMING UP!

YOU SEE FAITH'S UNCLE IN THE STORE, BUT YOU FEEL PREPARED FOR ANYTHING.

WHERE'S EVERYONE? OH, THERE YOU ARE? WHERE'S THAT SHERIFF? DID YOU GET MY NIECE'S BODY?

THE SHERIFF LEFT, BUT THE BODY'S DOWNSTAIRS. COME THIS WAY, PLEASE.

A LOT OF MESSY WORK, ALL OVER AGAIN, BUT IT WAS QUITE EASY TO HACK THE OLD UNCLE IN TWO. AND NOW YOU PLACE HALF THE BODY IN THE OLD COFFIN. QUITE FUNNY, THE TOP OF THE SHERIFF AND THE BOTTOM OF THE UNCLE - EQUAL ONE MAN! YOU DON'T KNOW IT, BUT THAT'S YOUR FIRST MISTAKE.

HA! HA! QUITE A COMBINATION!

AND NOW YOU STUFF THE UPPER TORSO OF THE UNCLE WITH THE LOWER HALF OF THE SHERIFF - WHICH EQUALS TWO MEN. HA! HA! LAUGH - BUT THAT'S YOUR SECOND MISTAKE.

NOW, LET THE RATS GET TO WORK ON THEIR FEAST. MAYBE THE BATS'LL HELP.

THAT WAS QUITE A LOT OF WORK. YOU RETURN "HOME" TO RELAX IN THE CONTEMPLATION OF YOUR BELOVED'S WHITE BEAUTY. SHE MUST KNOW ALL YOU'VE DONE FOR HER - AND SHE MUST LOVE YOU ALL THE MORE FOR YOUR DARING AND COURAGE.

OH, MY BEAUTIFUL ONE, I AM TIRED. YOU SEE, I SHALL NEVER LET THEM TAKE YOU FROM ME.

SOME MONTHS LATER...

CREAK

THE CREAKING SOUND? YOU GO TO SEE— AND THERE BEFORE YOUR EYES AN AMAZING FUSION OCCURS! THE UPPER TORSO OF THE SHERIFF TOGETHER WITH THE LOWER OF THE UNCLE IS RISING FROM THE OLD COFFIN!

UGH--- NO— NO!

YOU JERK TOWARD THE TOOL BIN.

GET AWAY— GET BACK...

THE OTHER FIGURE APPROACHES:— THE UNCLE'S TORSO ATTACHED TO THE SHERIFF'S LEGS!

YOU RUN INTO YOUR COAL BIN AND BOLT THE DOOR. NOW YOU KNOW YOUR LITTLE JOKE OF MIXING TORSOS MADE WHOLE BODIES GROW, DON'T YOU?

YOU NEVER FEARED GHOSTS BEFORE BUT THIS IS DIFFERENT AND YOU RUN —RUN TOWARDS—FAITH—BUT SHE IS DEAD AND CANNOT HELP . . .

YOU TRY TO PROTECT FAITH, A COLD CURRENT RUSHING THROUGH YOUR LIMBS, AS CRASH, CRASH, COMES THE SOUND OF AXES SPLINTERING THE COAL-BIN DOOR, AND THE TWO MIXED BODIES ADVANCE, INEXORABLY . . .

YOU CAN'T HAVE HER! SHE'S MINE!

AS OBLIVION STRIKES YOU IN AN AGONY OF PAIN, THE LAST THING YOU SEE FROM THE ENSHROUDING DARKNESS IS THOSE FIGURES, DIVIDING UP INTO FOUR TORSOS AGAIN AND— COLLAPSING ON THE FLOOR—UNMIXED AT LAST!

THE END

NOW

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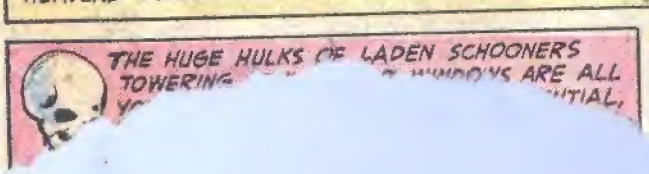
the CURSE of the SHOOTING STAR!
JONATHAN, ARE YOU MAD? PULL HIM IN! TOM WILL DIE!
CAN'T--WE'D DROWN! BOAT'S SHIPPING WATER!
SAVE ME--PLEASE!
A MAN DRUNK WITH HIS OWN POWER, CRAVING MORE AND MORE--AND ALWAYS GETTING WHAT HE WANTS--CANNOT BEAR TO BE DENIED. YOU ARE SUCH A MAN, STOPPING AT NO HORROR TO WIN YOUR GOAL, OR TO ELIMINATE WHAT STANDS IN YOUR WAY. YOUR PASSION FOR THE BEAUTIFUL JEANNE MOUNTS THE MORE SHE RESISTS YOU, THE MORE UNOBTAINABLE SHE IS. IT DRIVES YOU TO RUTHLESSNESS, TO PITILESS DEEDS, UNTIL THE HEAVENS THEMSELVES OPEN UP AND SEND RETRIBUTION FROM A... SHOOTING STAR!


THE HUGE HULKS OF LADEN SCHOONERS

YOU KNOW THAT JEANNE IS AWARE OF YOUR STRONG INTEREST IN HER, YET SHE REMAINS COOL, ALOOF.. HALF AFRAID...
THOUGHT YOU ROMISED TO CALL E JONATHAN?
ER..YES--JONATHAN. GOOD-NIGHT, JONATHAN.

YOU CAN'T LET HER OUT OF YOUR SIGHT. YOU HURRY AFTER HER, WORRIED LEST SHE BE GONE. BUT NO, SHE IS STANDING THERE, WAITING. A PANG LIKE A STRONG CURRENT COURSES THRU YOU AS A YOUNG MAN HURRIES TOWARD HER...
HELLO, JEANNE, AM I LATE?
JUST A LITTLE, TOM.
SHE SEEMS HAPPY TO SEE HIM!
STILL HERE, JEANNE?

YOU OBSERVE JEANNE IS STARTLED BY YOUR SUDDEN APPEARANCE. SHE ALWAYS SEEMS UNEASY WHEN YOU TRY TO BE PERSONAL WITH HER...
HELLO, TOM. WON'T YOU BOTH JOIN ME
HOW D'YA DO, SIR?

YOU'RE JEALOUS, CALCULATING AND YOU INSIST ON TAKING BOTH TO DINNER. YOU THINK IF YOU GET RID OF TOM, YOU CAN WIN HER SOMEHOW.
REALLY, JONATHAN, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE BOTHERED WITH US.
NOW, JEANNE, YOU WOULD NOT WANT ME TO DINE ALONE, WOULD YOU?

YOU DANCE WITH HER BUT ALL THE TIME YOU'RE HATCHING A PLAN- AN EVIL PLAN- TO GET RID OF TOM. YOU OWN A SCHOONER. YOU KNOW IT'S UNSEAWORTHY.... WHY NOT?
JEANNE, YOU'RE A THRILLING DANCER! WE SHOULD GO OUT MORE OFTEN!

YES, IT SHOULD BE EASY. GET RID OF TOM. AFTER ALL, HE WAS ONLY AN ASTRONOMER!
JEANNE, I'M PLANNING A CRUISE TO THE WHALING FIELDS. I WANT YOU ALONG. I'LL HAVE SOME WORK. WE'LL TAKE TOM, TOO
WHY, THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE, JONATHAN! I COULDN'T--

YOU DRAW HER RESISTING OUT TO THE TERRACE--USING THE HIGH-PRESSURE ARGUMENTS WITH WHICH YOU ALWAYS WIN A POINT...
TOM WILL GO TOO-- IF YOU ASK HIM.

HER RESISTANCE IS EBBING. HER FRIGHTENED EYES THRILL YOU STRANGELY. SHE COULD BE YOURS. SO YOU CONTROL YOUR THROBBING EMOTIONS...
JUST FOR A MONTH, YOU'RE MY SECRETARY AND I NEED YOU ALONG.
I'LL GO -- IF TOM WILL.

NOW YOU CAN AFFORD TO HUMOR HER. YOU KNEW TOM WAS THE LAST STRAW IN HER RESISTANCE.
TOM, CAN YOU GET AWAY FOR A MONTH? JOIN JEANNE AND ME ON A CRUISE WILL YOU?
YOU CAN STUDY THE NORTH STARS, TOM
MAYBE I CAN AT THAT! I CAN WORK ON MY NEW STARS! SOUNDS WONDERFUL!

A COLD WIND IS BLOWING ON THE DAY OF SAILING. YOU LOOK AT JEANNE. YOU'RE SURE YOU'LL GET HER ALONE SOMEHOW. TOM WOULDN'T COUNT MUCH HERE ON THE BIG SEAS...
TOM--ONE OF THE MEN'LL SHOW YOU YOUR QUARTERS. YOU COME WITH ME, JEANNE!

BUT--THINGS ARE MOVING TOO SLOWLY FOR YOU. TOM IS IN THE WAY. THEY ARE ALWAYS TOGETHER. YET YOU CONTINUE TO BIDE YOUR TIME...
IF I COULD BE WITH JEANNE ALONE -- IT WOULD BE DIFFERENT!

ONE NIGHT YOU REACH A CLIMAX OF THWARTED DESIRE AND YOUR OBSESSION FOR JEANNE REACHES AN UNBEARABLE PEAK. YOU SEE HER IN TOM'S ARMS...
I PROMISE NEVER TO LEAVE YOU! SOON WE'LL MARRY!
DEAR-PROMISE ME YOU'LL NEVER LEAVE ME!
SOON THE NORTH SEAS WILL HIT THIS OLD SHIP!

SOON THE BIG SEAS CAME AND THE STIFF BREEZE TURNED INTO A FIERCE BLOW, THEN INTO A HURRICANE. WITH BEAMS TOPPLING, MASTS SPLITTING, YOU KNOW THAT IN MINUTES THE BOAT WILL BE A WRECK --YOU ALSO KNOW WHAT TO DO...
TOM--GO BELOW AT ONCE...BRING ME MY LOG--SOMEWHERE IN MY CABIN!
BUT-- JONATHAN! OKAY, I'LL GO-- YOU FIND JEANNE!

THE ROARING OF THE WIND, THE BREAKING-UP OF THE BOAT BRINGS JEANNE ON DECK. YOUR COURSE IS SET AT LAST. YOU ORDER THE SHIP ABANDONED--YOU KNOW IT'S INSURED...
COME, JEANNE, QUICK, INTO THIS LIFEBOAT!
BUT WHERE'S TOM?

YOU HAVE FOUND THE WAY TO GET RID OF TOM. DESPITE THE MAD WEATHER, YOU SMILE HAPPILY...
OH, TOM GOT INTO THE FIRST BOAT. QUICK, JEANNE! LET'S GO!

AN HOUR LATER, YOU ARE CLOSE TO JEANNE -- ALONE TOGETHER AT LAST. YOU BOTH WATCH THE WRECK SUDDENLY NOSE-DIVE TO IT'S WATERY GRAVE...

BUT, JONATHAN! TOM ISN'T IN THAT BOAT! ARE YOU SURE HE GOT IN?

I TOLD HIM TO, JEANNE. I DIDN'T PUT HIM IN PERSONALLY!

THE WIND HAS DIED DOWN AND A GREY MIST OVERHANGS THE LONELY WASTE OF WATER WHERE YOUR SHIP DISAPPEARED FROM VIEW. YOUR HEART IS LIGHT, FOR JEANNE WILL NOW TURN TO YOU...

OH! THE BOAT'S GONE! WHERE'S TOM?

I'M SURE HE'LL TURN UP--UNLESS HE WAS STUPID ENOUGH TO STAY ON THE BOAT INSTEAD OF OBEYING MY ORDERS TO GET INTO A LIFEBOAT!

SUDDENLY A CRY COMES ACROSS THE WATER, YOU FEEL A SENSE OF FOREBODING...

H-H-H-E-L-P!

WHAT'S THAT, JONATHAN? A VOICE? CALLING US?

GUESS SO. WE'LL SEE!

YOU ROW NEAR THE FLOATING OBJECT. A BLACK CLOUD FILLS YOUR BRAIN. THE MAN YOU APPROACH IS--TOM!

IT'S--IT'S TOM! OH, THANK GOD! QUICK, JONATHAN, GET HIM, GET HIM!

WE MUST TURN. WE'RE SHIPPING WATER!

BUT YOU PURPOSELY TURN INTO A BIG WAVE.... IT KNOCKS JEANNE UNCONSCIOUS.....

HELP! S-SAVE ME!

YOU SEE TOM SWIM AFTER THE HEAVY BOAT, DESPERATELY TRYING TO SAVE HIMSELF. YOU KEEP PULLING AWAY...

W-A-I-T!

TOM REACHES THE BOAT, CLINGING TO IT. BUT YOU JAB AT HIS FINGERS, WITH YOUR AXE....

IN A TOWERING RAGE, YOU SEVER THE CLINGING HAND AS TOM FALLS BACK INTO THE WATER WITH SHRILL SCREAMS OF AGONY..
THIS'LL MAKE YOU LET GO!
ARRRGHH!

BEFORE JEANNE REVIVES, YOU SEE WITH HORROR TOM'S FINGERS STILL CLINGING TO THE BOAT. IN A PANIC, YOU THROW THEM INTO THE WAVES, AS YOU ROW GRIMLY ON...
.. I'M MAD FOR YOU, JEANNE! I'LL STOP AT NOTHING TO GET YOU!

YOU EXPLAIN THE BIG WAVE SWEPT TOM AWAY. THEN YOU SIGHT A SHIP...
AT LAST-- A SHIP!
I TOLD YOU WE'D BE SAVED!

A NEW SURGE OF HOPE FILLS YOU AS THE BOAT PULLS ALONGSIDE. YOU CAN MAKE JEANNE FORGET THE WHOLE MESS...
YOU'LL FEEL BETTER, MY DEAR, AFTER A HOT BATH AND SOME FOOD!
WILL I?

YOU TRY TO SPEAK TO THE CAPTAIN OF THE SHIP BUT NEITHER UNDERSTANDS THE LANGUAGE OF THE OTHER. HE PUTS YOU ON THE CREW...
I--WORK--FOR-LADY -AND MYSELF TILL WE REACH A PORT!
YAH! YAH!

ONE NIGHT YOU ARE SEARCHING THE SKIES. YOU SEE A STRANGE NEW REDDISH STAR. YOU HAVE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE...
RIGHT NEAR THE TOP OF THE MAST--THERE--THERE IT IS! IT'S A STRANGE STAR!

THE FOURTH NIGHT YOU INDUCE JEANNE TO COME AND LOOK AT THE NEW STAR...
D'YA SEE IT, JEANNE? IT'S SO BRIGHT AND RED!
YES, JONATHAN, I SEE IT!

THERE IS SOMETHING STRANGELY EXCITING TO YOU ABOUT THIS NEW STAR IN THE HEAVENS. SHARING IT WITH JEANNE, YOU FIND HER MORE FRIENDLY...
DO YOU THINK YOU CAN CLIMB TO THE LOOKOUT--YOU'LL SEE IT BETTER THERE, JONATHAN...
SURE I CAN! WATCH ME!
YOU CLIMB THE DIZZY HEIGHTS, HIGHER AND HIGHER, DRAWN UP AND UP BY THE FASCINATION OF THE NEW STAR...
A STRANGE ILLUSION STRIKES YOUR SIGHT--THE STAR IS TURNING INTO A SEVERED HAND! TOM'S!
MY--IMAGINATION--IS PLAYING TRICKS!
THE HAND GRABS YOUR AXE AND CHOPS YOUR HAND!
WITH A WEIRD SHRIEK, AS YOUR HAND IS SEVERED FROM YOUR ARM, YOU TOPPLE FROM YOUR PERCH--AND YOU FALL INTO THE SEA!
ARRRRRGH!
DYING, YOU SEE THE BOAT SPEEDING AWAY AS JEANNE WATCHES YOU DROWNING JUST AS YOU WATCHED TOM...
H-HELP--GULP!
CAN'T, JONATHAN--WE'RE SHIPPING WATER! HA-HA!
YOU ARE DEAD--AND JEANNE HAS PICKED UP A STRANGE STONE AND NOW SHE KNEW TOM WOULD NEVER REALLY LEAVE HER...
WHY, IT WAS A FALLING STAR--AND IT'S SHAPED JUST LIKE A HAND, WITH FINGERS AND A RING THAT SAYS, "TOM."
THE END

GIRL INTO VAMPIRE

by TERRY BROWNE

THE WIND howled like a mad dog, lashing at the bare branches and making them shriek as they snapped at each other. A lone figure, huddled deep in his coat, hat pulled far down, struggled through the night streets. At last he came to a stone building, darkened and locked up. In the shelter of the doorway, he stopped and looked in both directions, then across the street. Seeing not a living soul out in this foul weather, he drew a key from his pocket and carefully played with it inside the lock. The tumbler fell and the door opened. In one quick movement, he was inside.

It took weeks of mental struggle, tortured nights, for Kurt Finley to make up his mind to take this step. In the end, he knew he had to do it, because he could never give up Rita. He was losing her, that he could see. Sure she said she loved him, but a beautiful girl like that couldn't wait forever for a cheap guy like him. She was getting tired of the two-bit joints he took her to, and the cheap movies. But what could a hospital orderly do on a low salary? He had been quite satisfied until he met Rita and realized he didn't have enough money to entertain her. Now he needed more money.

Last week he had seen the ad for blood, the blood of rodents, like squirrels and rats. They paid well and he had managed to supply the laboratory several times. The extra money helped. He had taken Rita to a swell place to dance. But she complained about her shabby clothes. That's when the new plan struck him. If he could steal back from the lab the blood he had delivered and more besides, he could sell them large quantities—just for the trouble it would take to get into the laboratory. There was something funny in the idea—but it was a risk, too.

NOW, Kurt was inside the cold, stone, corridor of the entrance hall. So far it was easy; he had picked a perfect night. Staying close to the wall, in deep shadow, Kurt made his way slowly, stealthily, toward the door leading to the blood bank. It was the third door, he knew. He had seen it several times in the daytime. As he neared the second door, he heard soft, eerie sounds. His blood chilled and he froze to the wall. Peering toward it, he noticed the door slightly ajar. Intense curiosity impelled him to push it open a little further. A dim light inside revealed many cages lined up, and inside were all the different animals which were to contribute their blood to the laboratory experiments. So this is where the creatures were kept! The squealing, squeaking noises had come from there.

Kurt proceeded on to the next door and found the blood bank. Luckily, his experience in the hospital made him familiar with blood types and they were all neatly labeled. He selected those which he knew were wanted by the lab and as he left he chuckled to think how simple it was and how pleasant to make money by selling the stuff back to the lab.

The whole scheme worked fabulously. Kurt had been smart enough to take small amounts at a time, so that they wouldn't be missed at the lab. He'd then pour them into different vials and bring them back to the lab, explaining that he had had some experience in drawing blood and it saved him the trouble of bringing animals to them. Whatever doubts they had at first were removed when their tests showed the blood was always the desired type. They soon had complete confidence in Kurt. They never guessed it was the blood they themselves had extracted from the animals.

Kurt's success made a marked change in him—and in Rita. Money was now plentiful and he dressed well. In fact, he gave up his job as hospital orderly, and devoted his business hours (odd hours though they were) to his blood bank business. His generosity to Rita made her love him more than ever. He was no longer afraid of losing her.

"Kurt, darling," she said, "I knew you'd be a success some day. I don't understand too well about blood-bank business, but it certainly pays well. What I wonder is how you can catch all those squirrels and rats, and where?"

Kurt smiled fondly at his beloved. "Don't worry

your beautiful little head over such matters, Rita," he said patronizingly. "I have my methods—and they pay, *pay well.*"

These days, Kurt had a little room for his business, the business of transferring the blood into his own vials. He had to keep a careful record and labels, so as not to mix up the blood types. In the midst of this operation one morning, the telephone interrupted him with an insistent ring. "Must be Rita," ran through his mind.

But it wasn't Rita. "Is this Mr. Finley, Mr. Kurt Finley?" a man's hard voice was asking. "Yes, yes," Kurt replied, suddenly tensing. His thoughts flew to his shady business.

"Do you know a Rita Paley?" the voice went on.

"Why, yes, of course, I do. Who wants to know?" Kurt retorted.

"This is Patrolman Kelson," he explained. "Miss Paley was injured in an accident. She gave us your name. Will you come down to Grant Hospital, Mr. Finley?"

"I'll be there," Kurt hurled his answer through the phone and banged down the receiver. His beautiful Rita, injured! He hadn't asked how badly, or anything. As he sped downtown it went over and over in his mind—"I can't lose her. Everything I've done—has been for her. Oh, Rita, I can't lose you now."

At the hospital, he found Rita in a coma. The doctor explained that she had been in an accident. She had lost much blood and a transfusion was needed at once. However, her blood type was rare, and very hard to obtain and very expensive to purchase.

"Can it wait a half hour, doctor?" Kurt asked tensely.

"Well, yes," the doctor answered.

"I have connections. I can get the blood type, doc. Be back in a jiffy," said the worried Kurt, as he hurried away.

He knew where in Dr. Kimball's lab in his own hospital was a bottle labelled with the very blood type the doctor needed for Rita. Lately, he had been expanding his "business" by even stealing human blood specimens and selling them back to the lab. What luck! It would save Rita's life, and at no expense.

Fifteen minutes later, Kurt was back and the doctor approved the blood specimen, administering it to Rita.

"Go home and get some rest," the doctor advised Kurt. "Don't come to see your young lady till tomorrow. She'll be much improved."

That night, Kurt tossed restlessly in bed. Thoughts of Rita, pale, unconscious, haunted him. He jumped up and lit a cigarette, staring from the window into the night. A taxi came along. It stopped at his door. The driver let out his passenger—a slender, young woman—no, it couldn't be—Rita!

Whirling away from the window, Kurt hastily got into his robe and slippers. On the landing, he saw Rita coming up. She mounted the steps slowly, her face uplifted, smiling at him. How pale she looked, and how bright and strange were her eyes! Something in her expression startled him and he waited for her to come up, instead of rushing to meet her.

"Darling, how—how are you?" he greeted her.

"Wonderful, Kurt. All revived. That transfusion was marvelous. I couldn't stay at the hospital another minute. I had to come to you," Rita spoke with a tense excitement.

As they entered Kurt's room, Rita stooped and picked up the morning paper. "Here's your paper, Kurt," she said, handing it to him. The headline struck his eye. Inside, he quickly spread out the paper to read: "Blood Stolen From Dr. Kimball's Lab." It went on: The thief who stole the vial of blood from the blood-bank at the Rowland Laboratory is in possession of a most dangerous substance. Experiments on Vampire Bats are in process at the laboratory and the stolen bottle, labelled erroneously, actually contains a specimen of Vampire blood . . .

"My God," Kurt exclaimed, turning to Rita. "You were injected with—Rita, what's the matter? Why are you laughing—so—strangely?"

Rita drew close to Kurt. "Sweetheart, hold me in your arms. Kiss me," she commanded. Her mouth was strangely cold as Kurt pressed his lips on hers. Suddenly a sharp sting pained his neck. He drew back—and saw Rita's sharp, white teeth bared, blood staining them. His fingers went up to his neck—and came back covered with blood. As a veil of unconsciousness came over him, he again felt that sensation of biting—biting . . .

GHOSTS ON CHOMOLUNGMA!
I SEE IT! THE ICE GHOST OF CHOMOLUNGMA! I'M COMING TO YOU... RIGHT UP TO THE VERY TOP! YOU CAN'T STOP ME!
RALPH... YOU'RE CRAZY! THERE'S NOTHING THERE! WE CAN'T MAKE IT... TOO COLD... CAN'T FIGHT THE STORM! WE MUST TURN BACK!
IT HAS NEVER BEEN CONQUERED, THE PEAK OF MT. EVEREST! THE PEAK THE NATIVES CALL CHOMOLUNGMA! WHAT IS IT'S AWFUL SECRET...? WHAT IS THE STRANGE FORCE THAT KEEPS MAN FROM IT'S FROZEN PEAK? ARE THE STORIES TRUE THE NATIVES TELL? OR ARE THERE REALLY... GHOSTS ON CHOMOLUNGMA?
RALPH! DON'T CUT THE ROPE! ARE YOU CRAZY? COME BACK, RALPH... WE CAN'T MAKE IT!
I SEE THE GHOST! I MUST GET TO IT... MUST REACH THE PEAK!
RALPH CUT THE ROPE! RENE DUG HIS HOOKS INTO THE ICE AND ROCK! HE WATCHED AS RALPH, WITH ALMOST SUPER-HUMAN EFFORT, CLAMBERED STILL UP-WARD, THEN DISAPPEARED INTO THE STORM...
RALPH! RALPH!

RENE HUNG ON--AND WAITED! HE FOUGHT THE RAGING WINDS... THE 30-DEGREE BELOW ZERO COLD! RALPH DIDN'T RETURN! WHEN HE COULD HOLD ON NO LONGER, RENE DESCENDED TO THE CAMP...

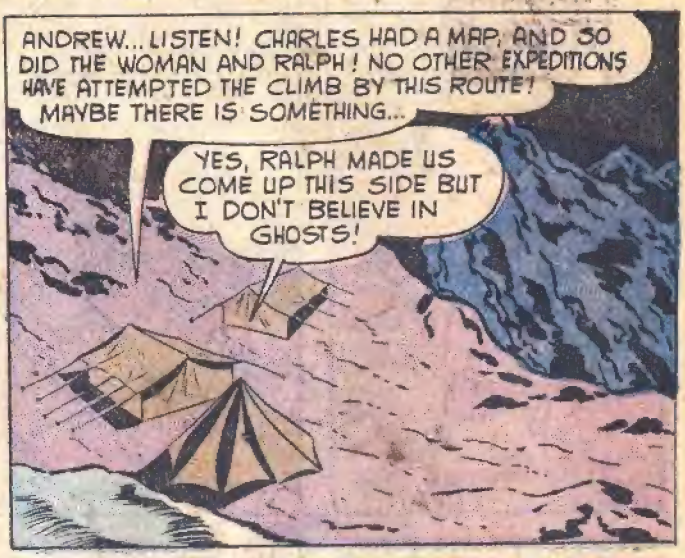
CHARLES WINSTON DREW HIMSELF A MAP OF THE GIANT MOUNTAIN'S SLOPES...

CHARLES WINSTON WAS AN EXPERT CLIMBER! ONE DAY, IN 1921, AT THE EXPLORER'S CLUB IN LONDON...
CHARLES WINSTON HAS SCALED MONT BLANC AND THE MATTERHORN! WHAT NEXT, MY BOY?
WELL, GENTLEMEN, AS YOU KNOW, I DISCOVERED A NEW PASS TO THE TOP OF MT. EVEREST...
...NOBODY'S EVER FOUND THAT PASS... THEY EVEN SAY IT DOES'NT EXIST, BUT I THINK THE TIME IS RIPE! I'M GOING TO TRY IT TO THE TOP THROUGH MY PASS!
DID YOU KNOW THAT GEORGE LEIGH-MALLORY IS ORGANIZING AN EVEREST EXPIDITION? BUT NO ONE HAS EVER GOTTEN UP YOUR PASS AND RETURNED, CHARLES!
HIS LOVING WIFE ALSO BEGGED HIM NOT TO GO..
IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO YOU, I'LL DIE!
HERE'S A COPY OF MY MAP! DON'T WORRY, I'LL MAKE IT!
IT WAS A RACE BETWEEN CHARLES WINSTON AND LEIGH-MALLORY! LEIGH-MALLORY GOT UP TO 23,000 FEET THROUGH LHAPKA PASS AND FAILED! WINSTON'S FATHER TRIED TO MAKE IT THROUGH HIS PASS...
..AT ABOUT 24,000 FEET, HIS COMPANIONS HAD TO TURN BACK! BUT CHARLES WAS MORE STUBBORN...
IT'S TOO TOUGH... COME BACK! WE'LL TRY AGAIN NEXT YEAR!
I'VE GOT TO GO ON... MUST REACH THE PEAK...
WELL, YOU KNOW THE REST! THEY SEARCHED FOR HIM FOR THREE DAYS...
CHARLES IS LOST! HE'LL NEVER BE FOUND!
YES...WE'D BETTER GIVE UP...OH, WHAT AN AWFUL MOUNTAIN!
THE LIVING MEMBERS OF THE FATED PARTY WENT TO SEE HIS WIFE...
A TERRIBLE THING, MADAM! WE JOIN YOU IN YOUR SORROW!
CHARLES MAY BE DEAD, BUT HE DIDN'T DIE BEFORE HE REACHED THE PEAK! HE WOULDN'T GIVE UP!
3

I'M AFRAID WE'LL NEVER KNOW... I DON'T BELIEVE THERE EVER WAS A PASS!
I WILL FIND OUT! I HAVE A MAP OF THE PASS! I'LL FIND HIM AND NO ONE ELSE WILL GO THROUGH HIS PASS! IT WILL BE OUR TOMB! I SWEAR IT!
MEANWHILE, RALPH'S AIDS, RENE THE SWISS, AND BERNARD AND ANDREW, THE ENGLISHMEN.. BEDDED DOWN FOR THE NIGHT! THE FEARFUL STORMS RAGED OUTSIDE THE TENT...
WHAT HAPPENED THEN?
I HEARD SHE DISAPPEARED!
THAT'S RIGHT! PEOPLE SAY SHE WAS CRAZY! THEY PUT HER IN AN INSANE ASYLUM! SHE ESCAPED AND HASN'T BEEN SEEN SINCE!
BUT RALPH WINSTON... WHEN WAS HE BORN!
A MONTH AFTER HIS FATHER WAS LOST... WHEN HIS MOTHER WAS IN THE ASYLUM!
BUT WHAT DID RALPH MEAN... ABOUT GHOSTS! THE NATIVES SEEMED TO KNOW!
WELL, IT ALL BEGAN ABOUT A YEAR AFTER WINSTON'S MOTHER WAS LAST SEEN...
A LONE QUIET WOMAN APPEARED IN KATMANDU, THE CAPITAL OF NEPAL! SHE HIRED PORTERS AND BEGAN THE JOURNEY TO MT. EVEREST'S BASE...
ENGLISH LADY TRY CLIMB TO CHOMOLUNGMA! HAS SAME MAP OF LOST ENGLISHMAN!
HOW CAN WOMAN DO ALONE WHAT MEN COULD NOT DO TOGETHER!
ABOUT THE CLIMB, ALL WE KNOW IS WHAT THE LEAD GUIDE HAD TO TELL... SHE CLIMBED LIKE A DEMON...
WE ON SOUTH COLUMN NOW, ABOUT ABOUT 25,000 FEET! SHOULD MAKE CAMP!
GOOD! TOMORROW WE TAKE HALF OF THE PORTERS, AND CLIMB TO 26,000 FEET IF WE CAN!
THEY FOUGHT THEIR WAY UPWARD... AND THEN...
PORTERS... CAN GO... NO FURTHER! TOO MUCH STORM... NO AIR... CANNOT BREATH... WANT TO GO BACK!
LET THEM GO! BUT I MUST GO ON... I MUST! I MUST REACH THE PEAK!

BUT THE WOMAN CONTINUED TO CLIMB! THE LOYAL SHERPA STAYED WITH HER UNTIL...
TOO HIGH... NO AIR...
I MUST GO ON TO THE TOP.. I MUST REACH IT...
THE SHERPA, BHOTIA, TRIED TO STOP HER! BUT SUDDENLY SHE BEGAN TO SCREAM... LOUDER THAN THE HOWLING WINDS...
I SEE HIM... UP THERE... IN THE SNOW! BUT... IF HE HAS NOT REACHED THE PEAK...NO MORTAL BEING EVER WILL... OUR SPIRITS...FOREVER WILL DRIVE THEM AWAY!
STOP! NO-ONE THERE!
THE WOMAN, AS IF CRAZED, CLAWED HER WAY UPWARD... ALONE... AND SHE WAS ENVELOPED BY THE STORM.
SHE IS GONE... LOST ON CHOMOLUNGMA!
NOW WE THINK TO WOMAN WAS CHARLES' WIFE... RALPH'S MOTHER...

THIRTY YEARS HAVE GONE BY... AND EVEREST IS STILL UNCONQUERED! CHARLES WINSTON AND HIS WIFE ARE LEGENDS! THE NATIVES ARE BELIEVERS IN REINCARNATION... AND GHOSTS!
AND RALPH WINSTON BELIEVES THAT THE GHOSTS ON EVEREST ARE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER!


ANDREW... LISTEN! CHARLES HAD A MAP, AND SO DID THE WOMAN AND RALPH! NO OTHER EXPEDITIONS HAVE ATTEMPTED THE CLIMB BY THIS ROUTE! MAYBE THERE IS SOMETHING...
YES, RALPH MADE US COME UP THIS SIDE BUT I DON'T BELIEVE IN GHOSTS!

THE DAY DAWNED FRIGID WITH HOWLING WINDS!..THE CLIMBERS CHECKED ROPES, HOOKS, OXYGEN TANKS! THE FINAL ASSAULT BEGAN ON EVEREST'S FORBIDDING PEAK...
RENE... DO YOU THINK WE'LL FIND HIS BODY? PERHAPS WE SHOULD HAVE COME BY LHAPKA PASS?
NO! MALLORY AND IRVINE WENT UP THAT WAY IN 1924! THEY WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN! REMEMBER... THE RUTTLEDGE EXPEDITION FOUND MALLORY'S AXE NINE YEARS LATER

ANDREW... THIS IS IT! THE SPOT WHERE RALPH WINSTON DISAPPEARED!
WE'RE ONLY 150 FEET FROM THE TOP! WE HAVE TWO GOALS NOW... TO FIND HIS BODY... AND TO REACH THE PEAK!

BUT WHAT OF RALPH WINSTON? HAS HE DISAPPEARED? WE WILL LET YOU SEE WHAT REALLY HAPPENED...
I'M GOING ALL THE WAY... TO THE VERY PEAK... I SHALL CONQUER CHOMOLUNGMA!
SUDDENLY HE HEARD THE WIND OR A HUMAN VOICE...
GO NO HIGHER... STRANGER...
MOTHER! FATHER! IT IS ME, RALPH! YOUR SON! I HAVE COME TO FIND YOU AND THE PASS TO THE TOP!
WITH SUPERHUMAN EFFORT, HE CLIMBED HIGHER AND HIGHER
NO! NO! GO BACK! YOU CANNOT GET THROUGH!
SLOWLY... LABORIOUSLY... RALPH STRUGGLED! DESPERATELY, HE FOUGHT THE ICE THAT BLOCKED HIS PATH... THEN HE SLIPPED... AND STARTED TO FALL TO SURE DEATH. BUT..
THE ICE FIGURES ARE MOVING... ENVELOPING ME! THEY SAVED ME FROM FALLING!
I'M BEING ENTOMBED IN THE ICE!
DO NOT FEAR! YOU WILL LIVE FOREVER WITH US UP HERE!
AS RALPH WINSTON FOUGHT THE MOUNTAIN, ONLY 100 FEET BELOW HIS COMPANIONS GROPED ALONG THE ENSHROUDED MOUNTAIN SIDES...
STOP! LISTEN! I HEAR SOMETHING!
YES! I WILL STAY WITH YOU FOREVER!
RALPH'S VOICE! CALLING TO THE GHOSTS!
BAH! THERE ARE NO SUCH THINGS AS GHOSTS!
6

WITH RENEWED EFFORT, THE SEARCHERS PUSHED UPWARD... UPWARD INTO THE EMPTY UNKNOWN! SUDDENLY...

LOOK AT THE SHELF OF ICE! HOW CAN WE GET BY THAT?

LOOK AT ITS SHAPE! IT SEEMS TO BE THE FORM OF A WOMAN AND TWO MEN!

THERE ARE NO GHOSTS! THE ICE SOMETHIMES MAKES STRANGE FIGURES! WE MUST CONTINUE!

THE CLIMBERS ATTACKED THE PERILOUS SHELF OF ICE! THEN...

LOOK! RALPH'S PICK AND OXYGEN TANK...I EMBEDDED IN THE ICE!

BUT WHERE'S RALPH? HE COULDN'T CLIMB HIGHER WITH OUT THE PICK AND WITHOUT OXYGEN!

HE COULDN'T HAVE FALLEN...HE'D HAVE HIT US! BESIDES...THE TANK WAS STRAPPED TO HIS BACK! WE MUST GO ON!

ANDREW! BERNARD! LOOK...THERE! IN THE ICE... THREE IDENTICAL MAPS!

THREE MAPS! ONE BELONGED TO CHARLES WINSTON, ONE TO RALPH AND ONE TO HIS MOTHER!

THE STORM ERUPTED IN A FINAL BURST OF FURY! THE ICE TREMBLED UNDER THEIR FEET...

THE ICE IS SURROUNDING US! I'M AFRAID! LET'S GO DOWN!

LET'S LEAVE QUICKLY! NOW WE'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO RALPH OR REACH THE PEAK!

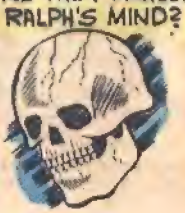
WEARY, DISPIRITED...THEY RETURNED TO THEIR CAMP... THE FIRST STEP IN THE LONG DESCENT...

THAT ICE SHELF'S FORM! THE WAY THEY MOVED! RALPH'S GEAR! THOSE THREE MAPS! I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT!

WHO MAY EVER UNDERSTAND IT? PERHAPS THE NATIVES ARE RIGHT! PERHAPS THERE ARE GHOSTS ON CHOMOLUNGMA!

7

THEY BROKE CAMP THE NEXT MORNING! DURING THE LONG TREK BACK, THEY ALL HAD THE SAME THOUGHTS! WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO RALPH WINSTON? WAS HE DEAD OR ALIVE? ARE THERE GHOSTS ON CHOMOLUNGMA...OR WERE THEY MERELY IN RALPH'S MIND?



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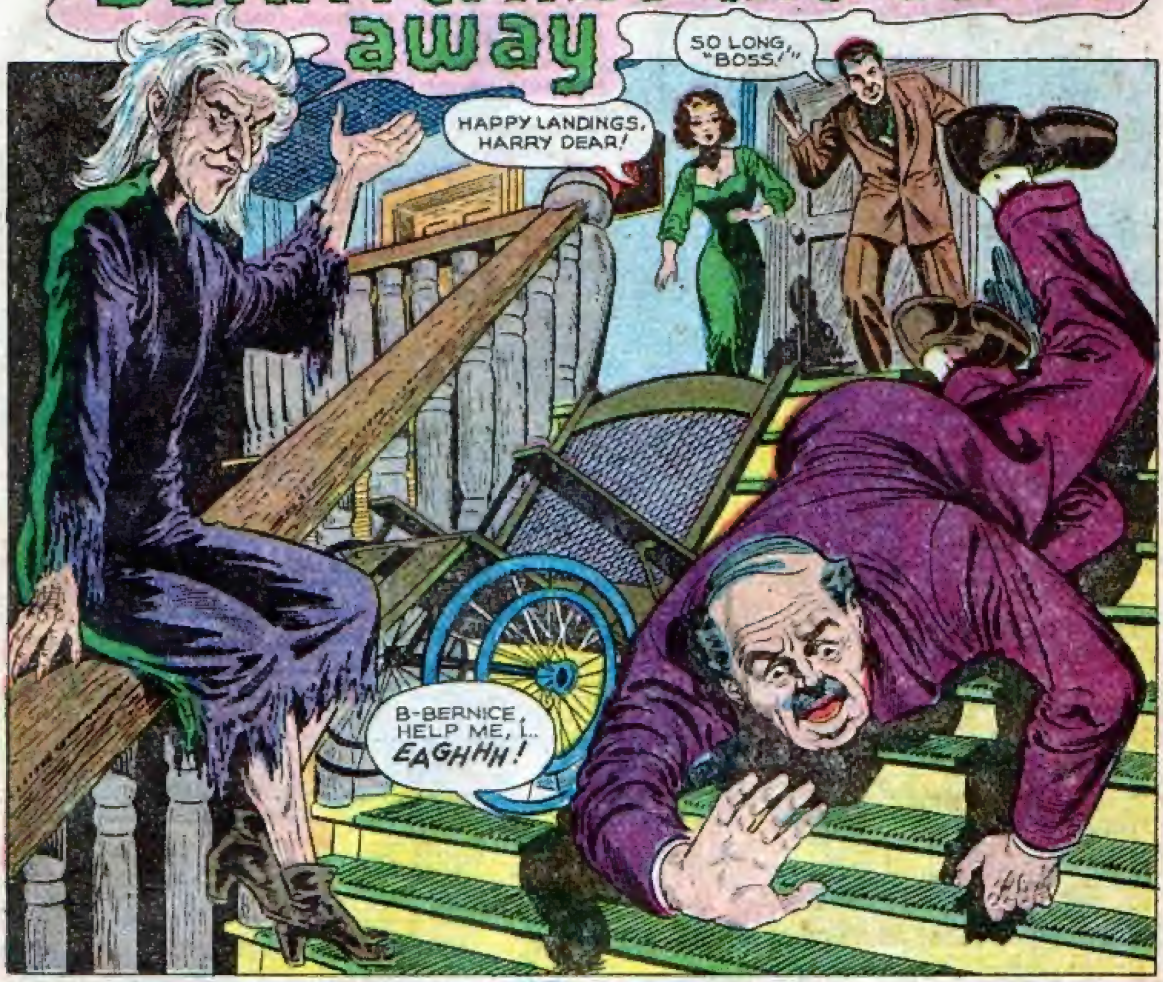
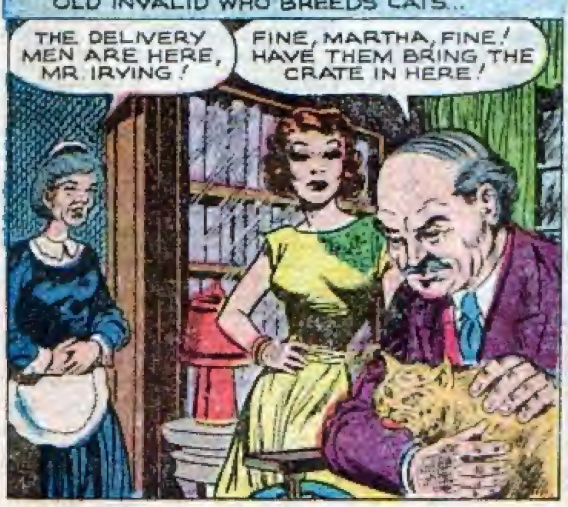
SIT BACK AND PREPARE TO ENJOY YOURSELVES, GHOUL LOVERS! THIS TIME WE'VE GOT A SHOCKING TALE OF HORROR AND TERROR THAT WILL CHILL YOU TO THE VERY CORE OF YOUR BONES! IT'S A SAGA OF MURDER AND MAYHEM WE CALL...

DEATH while the cat's away



YOUR NAME IS BERNICE IRVING! YOU'RE 28 YEARS OLD AND FOR THREE YEARS YOU'VE BEEN MARRIED TO HOMER IRVING, A 55 YEAR OLD INVALID WHO BREEDS CATS...



YOU KNOW WHAT'S IN THE CRATE, DON'T YOU, BERNICE... ANOTHER CAT... IT'S ALWAYS ANOTHER CAT!

YOU WATCH WITH DISGUST AS HOMER FONDLES THE NEW ARRIVAL...A LARGE, FLUFFY ANGORA / AS USUAL, YOUR HUSBAND IS IN AN ECSTACY OF DELIGHT.

COME HERE, BABY, I WON'T HURT YOU! BERNICE, COME LOOK AT HER!

LATER, HOMER! I'M GOING FOR A WALK!

UGH! CATS! I'M SICK OF THEM!

YOU GO FOR A STROLL AROUND THE GROUNDS BUT EVEN THERE YOU CAN'T ESCAPE THE INEVITABLE CATS!

'MORNING, MRS. IRVING!

GOOD DAY, MURPHY! MORE CATS...GOD WON'T I EVER BE FREE OF THEM?

HOMER IRVING CATS OF ALL VARIETIES

NO, BERNICE, YOU DON'T LIKE CATS, DO YOU? AND WHAT'S MORE, YOU DON'T LIKE YOUR HUSBAND! YOU MARRIED HOMER IRVING FOR HIS MONEY, BUT ALONG WITH SECURITY YOU ALSO GOT BOREDOM!

YOU SEEM A LITTLE RESTLESS, MY DEAR, IS ANYTHING WRONG?

NO, HOMER, NOT A THING! EVERYTHING IS PERFECT...JUST PERFECT!

YEAH, PERFECTLY AWFUL!

THAT'S FINE, DEAR! BY THE WAY, MURPHY'S LEAVING THE FIRST OF THE MONTH... GOING OUT TO CALIFORNIA WITH HIS SON! I'LL HAVE TO GET A NEW MAN!

BUT YOU'RE TOO BUSY WITH YOUR OWN THOUGHTS TO PAY ANY ATTENTION TO HOMER'S IDLE RAMBLINGS, AREN'T YOU, BERNICE?

IF THERE WERE ONLY SOME WAY...SOME WAY TO GET RID OF HIM!

IT'S TWO WEEKS LATER NOW AS YOU WALK INTO THE DINING ROOM FOR BREAKFAST...

COME IN, BERNICE MY SWEET! I WANT YOU TO MEET BURT HARVEY! HE'S TAKING MURPHY'S PLACE!

HOW DO YOU DO, MRS. IRVING!

SOMETHING IN HIS VOICE IMMEDIATELY STARTLES YOU INTO REALITY AND WHEN YOU LOOK AT HIM...

WELL, HOW DO YOU DO, MR. HARVEY?

CALL HIM BURT, BERNICE! YOU'LL BE SEEING A LOT OF HIM!

?

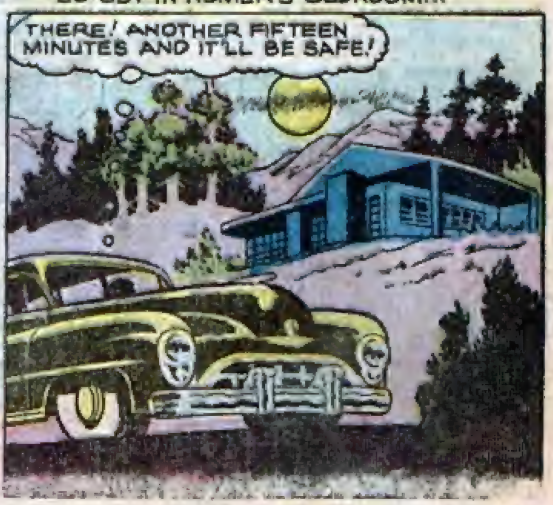
HOMER WAS RIGHT, WASN'T HE, BERNICE? AS THE DAYS PASS YOU ARE SEEING A LOT OF BURT HARVEY..

THAT'S JUST THE ANSWER YOU'D HOPED FOR, BERNICE... BUT WAIT A MINUTE, BE CAREFUL... HERE COMES HOMER...

TO YOUR RELIEF, HOMER WHEELS AWAY AND ONCE AGAIN YOU'RE LEFT ALONE WITH BURT HARVEY...

THAT'S JUST WHAT YOU WANTED, ISN'T IT, BERNICE! BURT HARVEY HAS MADE LIFE WORTH LIVING, AND YOU'RE DELIGHTED! THAT NIGHT, AS ALWAYS HOMER RETIRES EARLY...

YOU GO INTO THE GARAGE AND DRIVE THE CAR OUT ONTO THE HIGHWAY... AND THEN YOU WAIT... WAIT UNTIL YOU SEE THE LIGHTS GO OUT IN HOMER'S BEDROOM...



IMPATIENTLY YOU WAIT OUT THE 15 MINUTES AND THEN CAUTIOUSLY, YOU MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE SECRET RENDEZVOUS WITH BURT...

I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK YOU WEREN'T COMING, BABY!

I HAD TO MAKE SURE IT WAS SAFE! BETTER TO BE SAFE NOW THAN SORRY LATER!

IT ISN'T NECESSARY FOR YOU AND BURT TO SAY ANYTHING MORE! SECONDS LATER YOU MELT INTO ONE ANOTHER'S ARMS..

MEOWW

THE SOUND OF THAT CAT MEOWING FRIGHTENS YOU, DOESN'T IT, BERNICE? IT REMINDS YOU OF HOMER...

UGH! THOSE REPULSIVE CATS! CAN'T WE GET AWAY FROM THEM?

SURE, HONEY, SURE! COME ON, I FOUND A PERFECT SPOT THIS MORNING!

BURT LEADS YOU AROUND TO THE BACK OF THE ESTATE! BACK TO WHERE A LARGE CAGE IS HIDDEN BETWEEN TREES AND FOLIAGE...

HOMER HAD IT DELIVERED MONDAY! SAID SOMETHING ABOUT AN EXHIBIT! UNTIL HE PUTS THE CATS INSIDE, IT'LL BE PERFECT! OUT-OF-THE-WAY, AND QUIET, BABY!

AND SO STARTS A SERIES OF CLANDESTINE MEETINGS BETWEEN YOU AND BURT! WITHIN A MONTH, YOU'RE IN LOVE, BERNICE... WILDLY IN LOVE!

BURT, WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? I CAN'T GO ON THIS WAY! LIVING WITH HIM, HAVING TO KID HIM ALONG... I HATE HIM, BURT!

TAKE IT EASY, HONEY, THERE'S A WAY...

LOOK AT IT THIS WAY, BERNICE... I WANT YOU, YOU WANT ME, AND TOGETHER WE WANT OLD HOMER'S BANKROLL! IT'S SIMPLE! ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS GET RID OF HOMER!

YOU'RE NOT EVEN SHOCKED, ARE YOU, BERNICE? IN FACT YOU'VE BEEN THINKING THE SAME THING! BURT HAS IT ALL FIGURED OUT!

HOME ACCIDENTS ARE THE BIGGEST KILLERS... AND THAT'S THE WAY HOMER WILL DIE! JUST A SLIGHT "ACCIDENT!" NOW LISTEN CAREFULLY...

BURT'S PLAN IS SET FOR THE FOLLOWING THURSDAY NIGHT... THE SERVANT'S NIGHT OFF... IT'S WEDNESDAY AND AS YOU LISTEN TO HOMER PRATTLE, ALL YOU CAN THINK OF IS THAT IT'S ALMOST OVER...
I CAN HARDLY WAIT, IT'LL BE HERE TOMORROW!
WHAT'LL BE HERE TOMORROW?
MILK
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN LISTENING, MY SWEET! THE NEW CAT WILL BE HERE TOMORROW! I'VE ALWAYS WANTED ONE LIKE IT... AND I'M FINALLY GETTING IT!
THAT'S NICE, HOMER!
JUST ONE MORE DAY AND NO MORE CATS!
IT'S THURSDAY NOW AND BURT LEAVES WITH THE REST OF THE EMPLOYEES...
HAVE A NICE DAY,... AND BURT, I'LL HAVE A SURPRISE FOR YOU WHEN YOU GET BACK TOMORROW! A REAL SURPRISE!
IT MUST BE A NEW CAT! I'LL BE LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING IT, MR. IRVING!
THE PLAN CALLS FOR BURT TO GO INTO TOWN WITH THE MAID AND BUTLER AND THEN SNEAK BACK LATER! IN THE MEANTIME YOU GO UPSTAIRS...
CRATE FOR YOU, MR. IRVING!
GOOD! GOOD! I'LL SHOW YOU WHERE TO PUT IT!
IF I NEVER SEE ANOTHER CAT IT'LL BE TOO SOON!
THE HOURS CREEP BY SLOWLY BUT THEN AT LAST, IT'S TIME! AT NINE HOMER GOES TO BED AND AT NINE-THIRTY YOU MEET BURT AT THE BACK DOOR...
IT'S OKAY, HE'S ASLEEP!
GOOD, I'VE GOT THE CAT WITH ME!
NOISELESSLY, YOU AND BURT MAKE YOUR WAY UPSTAIRS AND OUTSIDE HOMER'S DOOR...
I HAVEN'T FED THEM FOR TWO DAYS SO DON'T WORRY, BABY, THIS ONE WILL YELL IT'S HEAD OFF!
BURT TIES THE CAT TO THE STAIR BANNISTER AND THEN YOU AND HE HIDE IN THE SHADOWS OF THE HALL...
THAT'S IT, LITTLE CAT, CRY!
MEOW

A FEW MINUTES LATER, YOU HEAR WHAT YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR...

THE DOOR TO HOMER'S ROOM OPENS AND HE WHEELS HIMSELF SLOWLY TO WHERE THE CAT IS TIED AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS...

HOMER CASTS A FURTIVE GLANCE BEHIND HIM, BUT IT'S TOO LATE, ISN'T IT, BERNICE?

YOU WATCH YOUR HUSBAND AS HIS CHAIR CAREENS WILDLY DOWN THE LONG FLIGHT OF STAIRS AND FINALLY CRASHES INTO THE BANNISTER... AND THEN THERE IS SILENCE... THE SILENCE OF DEATH!

BURT LEAVES BY THE BACK DOOR AND ACCORDING TO PLAN, YOU WALK TO THE TELEPHONE...

FIFTEEN MINUTES PASS AND THEN YOU HEAR THE SHRIEKING SIRENS IN THE DISTANCE! WHEN THEY ARRIVE YOU PLAY YOUR PART TO PERFECTION...

IT'S AN HOUR LATER! THE POLICE HAVE GONE TAKING HOMER'S BODY WITH THEM... IT'S ALL OVER, BERNICE, AND YOU RUN TO MEET BURT AT THE USUAL PLACE!

YOU REACH THE RENDEZVOUS AND OPEN THE DOOR TO THE CAGE...

BURT IS DEAD, ISN'T HE BERNICE? HIS BODY HAS BEEN TORN INTO BLOODY PIECES, HIS HEAD ALMOST SEVERED FROM HIS BODY...

AND THEN YOU HEAR IT... THE LOW GROWL, THE SOUND OF SOFT PADDED FEET ON CEMENT! IT'S A CAT... HOMER'S NEW CAT!

BUT IT WON'T GO BACK! NO, IT COMES CLOSER AND CLOSER... AND YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR TERRIBLE END WILL BE IN JUST A FEW SHORT SECONDS! THE CAT'S GOING TO KILL YOU, BERNICE... BUT LET'S NOT CALL IT A CAT, LET'S CALL IT BY IT'S REAL NAME... A LION!

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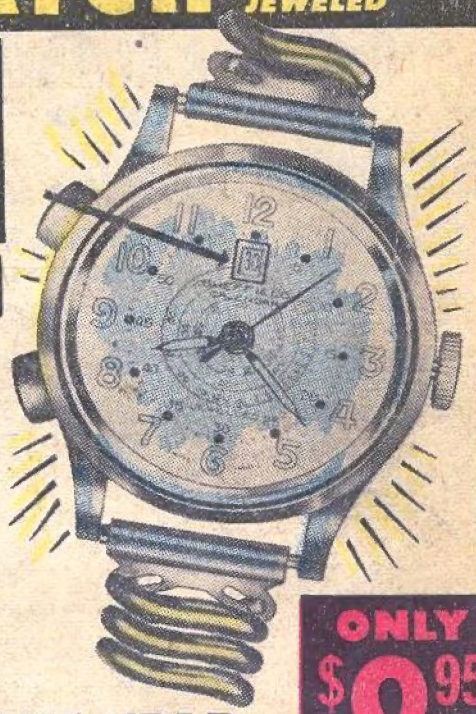

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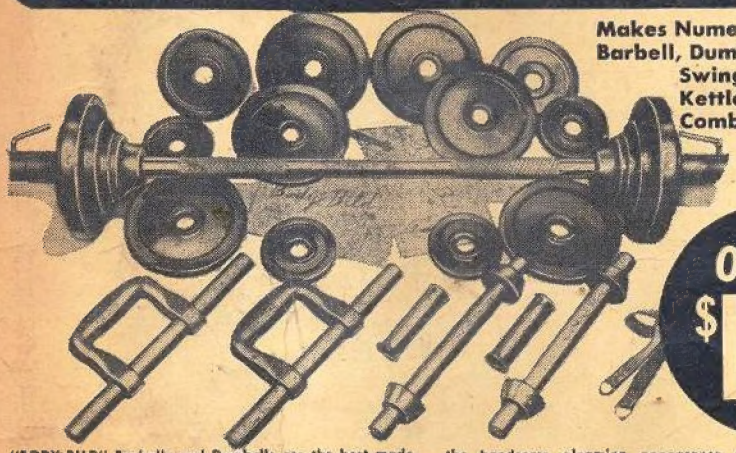

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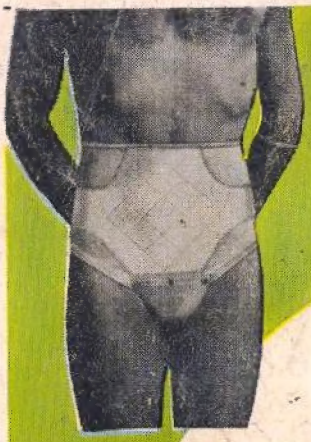

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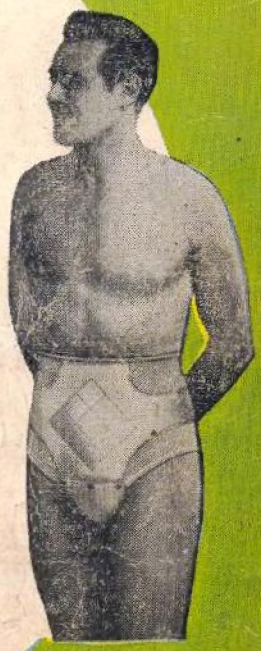

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